

R. J. Aley Building Contractor, LLC

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Renovations - Historic Preservation - NAHB Certified Green Builder - Energy Star Home Builder
Ct Home Improvement contractor Lic # HIC.0570003

TO: Chairman Doyle, Chairman Baram and members of the General Law Committee

RE: Proposed Bill HB 5149

Dear Chairman Doyle, Chairman Baram and members of the General Law Committee

I'd like to offer my full support for some kind of testing to license residential Contractors in the State of Ct. As a small contractor myself I can tell you that I fully support testing as a way to further protect the consumer.

Every week I see examples of poor workmanship, walls and windows that will rot in a matter of years because the people installing them, while well meaning, do not understand proper moisture control. I see boilers, furnaces and water heaters improperly installed that put the residents of the building at risk of fire or carbon monoxide poisoning. I see remodels without proper smoke alarms that put occupants at risk not to mention the money wasted when all this work has to be re-done in a few years.

I know there has been discussion in Hartford that an exam for licensing might have implications on the small contractor and those who may be immigrants or not speak English well. If someone does not speak English well enough to pass a simple test on building codes, safety and energy efficiency then should they really be in the business of working on people's homes? A home is the single largest investment most people make.

As it now stands Ct requires that electricians and plumbers be licensed in the state of Ct. Every day I work with very fine professional small business people in these trades who were not born in this country and whose first language is not English, yet they were able to pass the tests for these trades. The same requirements should be placed on General Contractors.

The test should include:

- 1) Yearly proof of Liability and Workers compensation insurance. Workers compensation is there first to protect the worker, but it also protects the Homeowner. There have been cases where un-insured workers were seriously injured at a home and ultimately the homeowner was sued by the un-insured worker. A basic Workers comp policy for a sole proprietor who works alone costs at the most \$1500 per year, maybe less.
- 2) Since the Federal Government already requires Contractors to be Lead Paint Certified this should be a requirement for a license in CT.
- 3) Since OSHA is now enforcing their fall protection requirements on residential contractors an OSHA fall protection training class should be a requirement for the license.
- 4) A basic knowledge of the building codes. The codes are the bare minimum for building a safe and durable home for consumers and as of 2009 require that a

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contractor have a basic knowledge of energy efficiency, insulation, heating and cooling systems.

- 5) A basic knowledge of contract requirements in the state of Ct such as the right of rescission clause required in all contracts.

Finally, while we are a Connecticut based company we often work in Westchester county NY. As a requirement for a Westchester County license we have to provide yearly proof of Workers Compensation, Liability Insurance and our Lead paint Certificate. If Westchester County can do this why can't Connecticut?